

**CANADIAN
ESSAYS, CRITICAL
AND HISTORICAL**

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Canadian essays, critical and historical by Thomas O'Hagan

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THOMAS O'HAGAN

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CANADIAN ESSAYS

CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL

BY

THOMAS O'HAGAN, M.A., PH.D.

AUTHOR OF "A GATE OF FLOWERS," "IN DREAMLAND," "SONGS OF
THE SETTLEMENT," "STUDIES IN POETRY," ETC.

*"But thou, my country, dream not thou!
Wake, and behold how night is done,—
How on thy breast, and o'er thy brow,
Bursts the uprising sun!"*

—*Roberts.*

TORONTO :

WILLIAM BRIGGS

1901

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TO THE BROTHERS
OF
THE INSTITUTE OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS,
DISCIPLES OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE,
THE FATHER OF MODERN PEDAGOGY,
I DEDICATE,
WITH SINCERE ADMIRATION,
THIS VOLUME.

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PREFACE.

THE following essays have appeared during the past few years in various magazines, and are now submitted to the public for the first time in book form. It will be noticed that they all deal with some phase of Canadian history or literature, and it is hoped that their publication will to some extent attain the purpose which their author has in view, namely, the promotion of a wider and better acquaintance on the part of Canadians with the historical and intellectual development of their own country.

It is quite true that nothing can be added to the literary worth of an author by injudicious praise, nor will puffery give poet, novelist or historian a seat in the parquet of true merit or a niche in the temple of permanent fame. Yet does it not seem, to say the least, shortsighted and unpatriotic that we Canadians should busy ourselves with the literary beginnings of other lands, and pay but little heed to the literary colonizers and toilers of our own? Is it, indeed, true "that one hears more of the Canadian

poets, Carman and Roberts and Campbell, in New York in a week than in Canada in five years"?

If it should appear that some authors whose contributions to Canadian literature are but slight have gained recognition in this volume, it is because such writers have cheerfully and patriotically given of their heart and brain—whether lyric, story or historical sketch—to enrich the intellectual life-blood of our country, and deserve, therefore, to be gratefully remembered in its literary annals.

It is to be hoped, too, that the essay dealing with French Canadian life and literature may help to make better known to the people of Ontario and the other provinces the literary worth and character of the French Canadian people, who were the pioneers of our country's progress, and who to-day form such an important part of this great Dominion.

The subject of the deportation of the Acadians is a mooted one in Canadian history. The writer begs to enroll himself with those who regard the exiling of the Acadians as unjustifiable, and who look upon it as the most cruel and wanton act that stains the page of New World history.

Though the papers on the Catholic Church in Ontario, the Jesuit martyrdom, and the life and

work of Rt. Rev. Alexander Macdonell appeal in interest especially to Catholics, yet their historical value as a record of the pioneer labors of the Catholic Church in the chief province of the Dominion may entitle them to be considered as a part of the general historical records of our country.

The author desires to acknowledge his indebtedness in the preparation of this volume to the following works: Rev. Dr. Harris's "History of the Early Missions in Western Canada"; Parkman's "Early Jesuit Missions in North America," "Wolfe and Montcalm," and "Half a Century of Conflict"; Kingsford's "History of Canada"; Martin's "Life of Brébeuf"; Rev. Dr. Teefy's "Jubilee Volume of the Archdiocese of Toronto"; "Reminiscences of Bishop Macdonell," by Chevalier Macdonell, K.H.S.; Dr. D. A. O'Sullivan's "Essays on the Church in Canada"; Benjamin Sulte's "Origin of the French Canadians"; William Parker Greenough's "Canadian Folk-life and Folk-lore"; Arthur Buie's "The Saugenay and the Valley of Lake St. John"; Haliburton's "History of Nova Scotia"; Abbé Casgrain's "Pilgrimage to the Land of Evangeline"; Richard's excellent work, "Acadia: Missing Links of a Lost Chapter in American History"; Rev. Dr. Scadding's "Toronto of Old"; Rev. Dr.

Dewart's "Selections from the Canadian Poets"; Morgan's invaluable work, "Canadian Men and Women of the Time"; Lighthall's "Songs of the Great Dominion"; and Dr. Rand's admirable "Treasury of Canadian Verse."

The courtesy of the publishers of the *American Catholic Quarterly Review*, the *Catholic World*, and "Canada: An Encyclopedia," for permission to reprint the four essays, "The Catholic Church in Ontario," "Canadian Poets and Poetry," "French Canadian Life and Literature," and "Canadian Women Writers," which were specially prepared for these publications, is hereby also gratefully acknowledged.

T. O'H.

TORONTO, CANADA, June, 1901.